

Summary of Proposed Changes

The Arkansas Energy Office (AEO) is responsible for promulgating regulations for the energy efficiency in new buildings (Act 7 of 1981). These regulations are known as the Arkansas Energy Code. The Energy Code prescribes minimum standards for the energy aspects of new building construction, including insulation levels of the building envelope, window efficiencies, efficiency of heating and air conditioning equipment and water heating.

The AEO proposes to update the Energy Code standards for new construction from the current 1992 Model Energy Code for new residential construction to the 2003 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) with Arkansas supplements and amendments, and to upgrade the Code for commercial buildings from ASHRAE 90.1-1989 to ASHRAE 90.1- 2001.

Why Update the Arkansas Energy Code for New Building Construction:

- The Energy Policy Act of 1992 requires states to adopt the ASHRAE standard that meets or exceeds 90.1-1999 for commercial buildings. The EPACT also requires states to review their residential energy code and if applicable, adopt the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) that meets or exceeds the 2000 Edition.
- The proposed Code simplifies compliance for homebuilders and design professionals. The vast majority of the builders will be able to use the simplified compliance tool, “Code Card” or compliance software to comply with the Code.
- The current Arkansas Energy Code was adopted in 1994 based on the 1992 Model Energy Code (MEC) format for residential construction and references the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning (ASHRAE) Standard 90.1-1989 for commercial buildings. The proposed code reflects current technologies and building practices used by Arkansas design professionals and builders.
- The proposed Energy Code is based on the widely accepted International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) that is part of the International family of codes used in the majority of jurisdictions in the U.S., including Arkansas. In fact, this Code upgrade effort by the AEO complements the recent adoption of the *Arkansas Fire Prevention Code* (Volume I Fire, Volume II Building and Volume III Residential and the *Arkansas Mechanical Code*). These codes are all based on the International family of codes that includes the International Energy Conservation Code.

The following are the basic amendments to the code:

- Changes from the Model Energy Code (MEC) format to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) 2003 format.
- Amends the Administration Chapter to integrate Arkansas-specific exceptions, exemptions, enforcement, compliance and effective date. Eliminates compliance certification for residential construction.
- Recognizes available compliance tools (software and simplified options)
- Replaces all occurrences of the *International Codes* with Arkansas specific codes: *Arkansas Fire Prevention Code 2002 Edition, Volume I (Fire), Volume II Building, Volume III Residential* and the *Arkansas Mechanical Code*.
- References the current ANSI/ASHRAE/IESNA Standard 90.1-2001 for commercial construction.